

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 ACDA-12 OMB-01 /072 W  
-----100280 092015Z /44

R 091821Z JAN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3040  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN  
AMEMBASSY LISBON  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY OSLO  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE  
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BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, SP  
SUBJECT: SEMPRUN'S BOOK PUTS PCE ON THE DEFENSIVE

1. SUMMARY. IN RESPONSE TO CHARGES CONTAINED IN A BOOK  
PUBLISHED IN LATE 1977 BY FORMER PCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
MEMBER JORGE SEMPRUN, THE SPANISH COMMUNISTS, AFTER FIRST  
ATTEMPTING, PUBLICLY AT LEAST, TO IGNORE THE WORK, HAVE  
BEGUN TO FIGHT BACK. BUT THE FIRST ROUND HAS UNQUESTION-  
ABLY GONE TO SEMPRUN, AND THE PCE WILL HAVE TO DO CON-  
SIDERABLY BETTER IF IT WANTS TO HOLD ITS OWN IN THE  
POTENTIALLY DAMAGING POLEMIC WITH HIM. WHETHER THIS WILL  
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HAVE THE EFFECT THAT SEMPRUN DESIRES--AN OPEN DEBATE AND  
CRITICAL SELF-EXAMINATION IN THE COMING PCE CONGRESS LEAD-  
ING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF EFFECTIVE INTERNAL PARTY  
DEMOCRACY AND THE REPLACEMENT OF MANY CURRENT PARTY LEADERS,  
INCLUDING CARRILLO--IS PROBLEMATIC AT BEST. HIS CHARGES,  
AND THE PCE'S THUS FAR MALADROIT HANDLING OF THEM, HARDLY  
CONTRIBUTE TO THE PARTY'S DRIVE FOR LEGITIMACY, BUT THEY

ALSO PROBABLY HAVE NOT DAMAGED ITS ELECTORAL PROSPECTS EITHER. END SUMMARY.

2. NOT SURPRISINGLY, IT HAS TAKEN A FORMER PCE LEADER-- IN THIS CASE JORGE SEMPRUN--TO SEND THE SPANISH COMMUNISTS SCURRYING FOR COVER FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE TRANSITION PERIOD. SEMPRUN, A NOTED SCREEN WRITER ("Z," "LA GUERRE EST FINIE"), WAS EXPELLED FROM THE PCE IN 1964, TOGETHER WITH FELLOW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER FERNANDO CLAUDIN, WHEN BOTH TOOK STRONG EXCEPTION TO THE LEADERSHIP'S ANALYSIS OF THE SPANISH SITUATION AND SUPPORTED A MODERATION OF THE PARTY LINE. SEMPRUN HAS DOCUMENTED HIS YEARS IN THE PARTY, AND PARTICULARLY HIS EXPULSION AND THE EVENTS LEADING UP TO IT, IN A PRIZE-WINNING AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL "NOVEL," "THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF FEDERICO SANCHEZ" (HIS PCE "NOM DE GUERRE"). IN THE BOOK, SEMPRUN INTER ALIA ATTACKS THE PARTY'S ENDEMIC (AND IMPLICITLY LINGERING) STALINISM AND MAKES SERIOUS CHARGES AGAINST MANY CURRENT PCE LEADERS, EVEN SUGGESTING THEIR CULPABILITY IN THE APPREHENSION BY SPANISH AUTHORITIES IN 1963 OF PCE LEADER JULIAN GRIMAU, WHO WAS BADLY BEATEN IN DETENTION AND WAS TRIED AND EXECUTED IN 1964.

3. AT FIRST, PCE REACTION TO THE BOOK WAS SIMPLY TO IGNORE IT, EXCEPT FOR PRO FORMA BLASTS IN THE PARTY WEEKLY, "MUNDO OBRERO"(ONE COMMENTARY CALLED IT A "PILE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF GARBAGE"). PCE SECGEN CARGVILLO, AT HIS DECEMBER 10 PRESS CONFERENCE (MADRID 77-10006), TURNED ASIDE QUESTIONS ABOUT SEMPRUN'S WORK, SAYING THAT HE HAD NOT READ IT, AND IMPLYING THAT HE DID NOT INTEND TO, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME AVERRING THAT "THE FEDERICO SANCHEZ I KNEW COULD NOT SAY SUCH THINGS." SUCH DISENGENUOUSNESS ON THE PART OF CARRILLO AND OTHER PARTY LEADERS HAS BEEN MUCH COMMENTED ON BY THE SPANISH PRESS, AND AS NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES INCREASINGLY SMELLED A STORY, IT BECAME IMPOSSIBLE FOR PCE LEADERS TO SIDESTEP THE ISSUE.

4. THIS WAS PARTICULARLY TRUE AFTER MADRID WEEKLY "CAMBIO 16," RAN A COVER STORY IN EARLY JANUARY ON THE AFFAIR, TITLED "EUROCOMMUNISM'S DIRTY LINEN." IN THE ARTICLE, "CAMBIO" REPORTERS EMPHASIZED THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF GETTING ANY PCE LEADER TO ADDRESS SEMPRUN'S ACCUSATIONS. ONLY PSUC PRESIDENT GREGORIO LOPEZ RAIMUNDO WOULD GRANT THEM AN INTERVIEW, AND HE DEFLECTED MOST OF THEIR QUESTIONS. THIS AND OTHER PRESS COMMENTARY APPARENTLY INDUCED CARRILLO TO CHANGE HIS TACK SOMEWHAT. ALTHOUGH THE PCE CHIEF STILL REFUSES TO ADDRESS SEMPRUN'S PARTICULARS, HE HAS NOW TAKEN TO PROTESTING THE EXIST-

ENCE OF A "CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE PCE, NOW BY THOSE WHO CLAIM TO BE OF THE LEFT," AND TO ACCUSING UNNAMED PUTATIVE LEFTISTS OF HAVING "RELIEVED" THE ULTRA-RIGHT IN SMEARING THE PCE.

5. FINALLY, ON JANUARY 4, PCE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY MANUEL AZCARATE PUBLICLY JOINED THE BATTLE WITH SEMPRUN IN A ONE-PAGE "PERSONAL" GUEST ARTICLE IN MADRID'S "EL PAIS." AZCARATE WAS LIMITED BY SPACE, BUT EVEN SO HIS PRESENTATION WAS SURPRISINGLY WEAK, UNNECESSARILY SUPERFICIAL AND HEAVY ON AD HOMINEM ARGUMENTS, ALL IN ALL DIGGING THE COMMUNISTS INTO AN EVEN DEEPER HOLE.

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AS CENTRIST (UCD) COMMENTATOR JAVIER TUSELL OBSERVED IN MADRID'S "INFORMACIONES," AZCARATE'S OBSERVATIONS "NOT ONLY MAINTAIN, BUT STRENGTHEN (SEMPRUN'S) ACCUSATIONS CONCERNING THE STALINISM OF THE PCE AND ITS LEADERS."

6. SEMPRUN'S OWN RIPOSTE, PUBLISHED BY "EL PAIS" ON JAN. 8, THANKS THE PCE LEADER FOR HAVING JOINED THE ISSUE, SINCE "ONE OF THE PURPOSES OF THE BOOK" WAS PRECISELY TO SPARK A DEBATE WITH AND WITHIN THE PCE, "WHOSE MILITANTS VITALLY NEED TO RECONSTRUCT A CRITICAL COLLECTIVE HISTORICAL MEMORY OF THEIR ORGANIZATION." LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HE THEN PROCEEDS, WITH OBVIOUS RELISH, TO DEMOLISH CONVINCINGLY AZCARATBS CRITICISMS OF THE BOOK.

7. COMMENT: WHETHER THE AZCARATE-SEMPRUN SET-TO IS THE OPENING BARRAGE OR A "FLOR DE UN DIA" WE WILL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE. BUT IT IS CLEAR THAT SEMPRUN AND OTHERS HAVE NO INTENTION OF LETTING THE PCE OFF THE HOOK, AND WHILE THE NORMAL REACTION OF PARTY MILITANTS WILL BE TO RALLY AROUND THE LEADERSHIP, THERE ARE, WE BELIEVE, SOME PARTY MEMBERS WHO DESIRE--AND MAY ATTEMPT TO INSIST ON--PRECISELY THE CRITICAL SELF-EXAMINATION THAT SEMPRUN IS CALLING FOR. IN ADDITION TO THIS EXPRESSED PURPOSE, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT SEMPRUN IS ATTEMPTING TO PRESSURE THE PCE, FROM OUTSIDE, TO RENEW ITS LEADERSHIP, AND THAT HE HAS SET HIS SIGHTS SQUARELY ON CARRILLO. WHILE HIS ATTACK COULD ACTUALLY WEAKEN THE POSITION OF THOSE PARTY MEMBERS SEEKING A HEALTHY DEBATE AT THE COMING CONGRESS, WHO MAY BE EVEN MORE VULNERABLE TO CHARGES OF DISLOYALTY THAN THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN OTHERWISE, IT MAY ALSO HAVE PRECISELY THE EFFECT SEMPRUN IS SEEKING, AND ENLIVEN WHAT ALREADY WAS CERTAIN TO BE AN EXTREMELY INTERESTING GET-TOGETHER. STABLER

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## Message Attributes

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